

Subject: HRSA Guide for Use of Government Office Equipment and Information Systems

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HRSA-1-10 PURPOSE

This Chapter sets forth responsibilities, policies and procedures for administering the personal use of Government Office Equipment by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) employees. This new policy is based on the *Limited Personal Use of Government Equipment Including Information Technology* published by the Federal Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council on June 7, 1999.

The intent of this policy is to provide you with a professional and supportive work environment while meeting taxpayer expectations that tax dollars will be spent wisely. By authorizing limited personal use of Government office equipment, HRSA assumes that you are a responsible individual, capable of balancing this privilege with the expectations of American taxpayers.

This policy does not supersede any other applicable law or regulation. Authorities related to this policy are listed in Section 50.

HRSA-1-20 DEFINITIONS

Government office equipment includes, but is not limited to: personal computers, related equipment and software, Internet services, email, library resources, telephones, facsimile machines, photocopiers and office supplies.

Minimal additional expense means the expense incurred when the Government is already providing equipment, supplies or services and you use only limited additional amounts of electricity, ink, toner or paper. Wear and tear from limited normal use is also considered minimal additional expense.

Non-work time means the time when you are not performing an activity for the benefit of the agency and under the control or direction of the agency. Examples of non-work time include off-

duty hours such as lunch periods, before or after a workday, weekends or holidays, but only if your duty station would normally be available to you at such times.

Personal use means uses other than official Government business.

Privilege means that you have no inherent or other right to personal use of Government office equipment.

Information technology refers to any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the automatic acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information.

Authorized users means any full time, part time, or temporary HRSA employee, interim, contractor under an active contractual agreement, or any individual authorized under a signed agreement to use HRSA resources in performing authorized duties.

HRSA-1-30 GENERAL POLICY

- A. Federal employees are permitted limited use of government office equipment in an office or official duty station for personal needs if the use involves minimal additional expense to the government AND does not interfere with official business. This limited personal use of government office equipment should take place during the employee's personal time (or employee non-work time). The privilege to use government office equipment for personal non-government purposes may be revoked or limited at any time by appropriate HRSA officials with notice and in their sole discretion. Supervisors may apply this policy to interns and other non-government employees through incorporation by reference in contracts or memorandums of agreement as conditions for using government office equipment and space.
- B. You may use Government office equipment only for authorized purposes. The following is a list of restrictions of use for authorized users:
 - 1. Limited personal use is only authorized if it involves minimal additional expense to the Government.
 - 2. You are authorized to make limited personal use of Government office equipment during non-work time.
 - 3. This use must not reduce your productivity or interfere with your official duties or the

official duties of others.

4. You must be authorized to use equipment for official Government business before it is available to you for limited personal use. Furthermore, HRSA is not required to supply you with equipment if it is not required for you to perform official Government business.
5. Managers and supervisors may further restrict personal use based on the needs of the office or problems with inappropriate use in the office. In such cases affecting bargaining unit employees, the union will be notified.

HRSA-1-40 INAPPROPRIATE PERSONAL USE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICE EQUIPMENT

- A. Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally in the workplace and to refrain from using government office equipment for activities that are inappropriate. Examples of inappropriate activities include:
 1. Using large files. Your activities might reduce the effectiveness of HRSA systems if you use large files. For example, sending or receiving greeting cards, video, sound, interactive games or other large file attachments may hinder the performance of an entire network. You should not subscribe to Internet services that automatically download information, such as sports scores, stock prices or other continuous data streams, such as music or videos.
 2. Loading personal software onto your computer or making configuration changes. For example, computer games, personal tax programs and personal schedulers may not be loaded on HRSA computers.
 3. Engaging in email practices that involve ongoing message receipt and transmission, referred to as *instant messaging*.
 4. Using Government equipment as a staging ground or platform to gain unauthorized access to other systems.
 5. Creating, copying or transmitting chain letters or other mass mailings, regardless of the subject matter.
 6. Creating, copying or transmitting any material or communication that is illegal or offensive to fellow employees or to the public, such as hate speech, material that ridicules others

based on race, creed, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin or sexual orientation.

7. Viewing, creating, downloading, storing, transmitting or copying materials that are sexually explicit or sexually oriented, related to gambling, illegal weapons, terrorist activities or any other activities or other activities prohibited by the Standards of Ethical Conduct.
8. Using Government office equipment for commercial purposes or in support of other for profit activities such as outside employment or businesses (e.g., selling real estate, preparing tax returns for a fee).
9. Engaging in any outside fund raising activity, endorsing any product or service, participating in lobbying or partisan political activity (e.g., expressing opinions about candidates, distributing campaign literature).
10. Acquiring, reproducing, transmitting, distributing or using any controlled information including computer software and data, protected by copyright, trademark, privacy laws, other proprietary data or material with other intellectual property rights beyond fair use, or export-controlled software or data.
11. Use for posting information to external news groups, bulletin boards or other public forums.
12. Any use that could create the perception that the communication was made in one's official capacity as a Federal Government employee, unless appropriate Agency approval has been obtained.
13. Any use that could generate more than minimal additional expense to the government.
14. Any use that could cause congestion, delay, or disruption of service to any government system or equipment. For example, video, sound or other large files can degrade the performance of the entire network. "Push" technology on the Internet and other continuous data streams would also degrade the performance of the entire network and be an inappropriate use.
15. Any action which might compromise the security of the system.
16. Any action which would be disruptive to fellow co-workers.

B. Sanctions for Misuse

The limited personal use of government office equipment is authorized. However, the improper

use may result in loss of use or limitations on use of equipment, disciplinary or other adverse action, criminal penalties and/or employees being held financially liable for the costs of the improper use.

C. Privacy Expectations

HRSA employees do not have a right nor should they expect privacy while using any government office equipment at any time, including accessing the Internet, using electronic-mail (E-mail), or for limited personal use. To the extent that employees wish that their private activities remain private, they should not use the Agency's office and IT equipment such as their computer, the Internet, or E-mail. By using government office equipment, executive branch employees confer their consent to disclosing the contents of any encrypted files.

1. Monitoring the Use of Government Equipment--By using this office equipment, consent to monitoring and recording is implied with or without cause, including (but not limited to) accessing the Internet, using E-mail, or for limited personal use. Any use of government communications resources is made with the understanding that such use is generally not secure and is not anonymous. For example, if you use a Government PC to read or respond to personal email sent to you at a non-Government email address (e.g., AOL, Yahoo), your use may be monitored.

All E-mail messages, including personal messages, (and other electronic database information) as defined in Federal Law, are government records. Electronic communications may be disclosed within an Agency to employees who have a need to know in the performance of their duties and may be disclosed outside the agency as provided under FOIA. Agency officials, such as system managers and supervisors, may access any electronic communications for work-related purposes. Electronic communications may only be disclosed externally in accordance with applicable law or regulations.

2. Proper Representation --An employee must ensure that your personal use does not give the appearance that you are acting in an official capacity. For example, you may not post HRSA information to external news groups, bulletin boards or other public forums without HRSA authorization. Further, you must not give the appearance that HRSA endorses or sanctions your personal activities. If your actions leave the impression that your personal activities are endorsed by HRSA, you may be in violation of the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Executive Branch Employees .

If there is any potential for confusion, you should provide an appropriate disclaimer. Here is an example of a disclaimer: The content of this message is mine personally and does

not reflect any position of the Government or of HRSA.

Employees should contact their supervisor if there are any questions regarding what constitutes minimal additional expense or any other aspect of this policy.

HRSA-1-50 LEGAL AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

5 C.F.R. 2635	Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch
E.O. 12674/12731	Principles of Ethical Conduct for Government Officers and Employees
40 U.S.C. 759	Computer Security Act of 1987
18 U.S.C. 1030	Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986
P.L. 104-231	Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendment of 1996
5 U.S.C. 552	Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
	Privacy Act of 1974
FCIO Council	Recommended Executive Branch Model Policy/Guidance on Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment including Information Technology URL: www.cio.gov/files/peruse.pdf
NIST SP 800-12	An Introduction to Computer Security: The NIST Handbook
FCIO Council	Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment including Information Technology , Federal Chief Information Officer Council, June 7, 1999.

This policy on limited personal use of Government office equipment is effective upon issuance.